

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 NEA-10 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02

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R 041119Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7947

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ISLAMABAD 10280

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EG, KS, PK

SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF ROK CONSUL GENERAL HAHM TO CAIRO

REF: CAIRO 13072

1. ROK CONSUL GENERAL YOUNGHUN HAHM HAS CONFIRMED TO US EMBASSY CAIRO'S REPORT (REFTEL) THAT HE IS TO BE TRANSFERRED TO EGYPT. HAHM, WHO HAS SERVED IN ISLAMABAD SINCE 1974, EXPECTS TO LEAVE HERE TOWARD THE END OF THIS MONTH. THE SOUTH KOREANS TELL US THAT HE WILL BE REPLACED BY CHOE JONG ICK (THEIR TRANSLITERATION), NOW ROK MINISTER IN LONDON.

2. HAHM IS SAID TO BE ONE OF THE ROK'S MORE SENIOR AND EXPERIENCED DIPLOMATS, AND CARRIES THE PERSONAL RANK OF AMBASSADOR. BEFORE COMING TO ISLAMABAD HE WAS PLANNING AND PROGRAM COORDINATOR AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IN SEOUL. ACCORDING TO HIS STAFF, HIS OVERSEAS ASSIGNMENTS HAVE INCLUDED SINGAPORE (WHERE IN 1970 HE OPENED THE ROK TRADE REPRESENTATIVE'S OFFICE AND HELD THE PERSONAL RANK OF MINISTER), OTTAWA (COUNSELOR), ROME (FIRST SECRETARY), AND HONG KONG (VICE CONSUL). IN THE LATE SIXTIES, FOLLOWING HIS OTTAWA ASSIGNMENT, HE SERVED AS
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DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR AMERICA AND EUROPE AT MFA.

3. AS ROK CONSUL GENERAL IN A COUNTRY WHICH HAS FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH PYONGYANG AND A LARGE AND ACTIVE NORTH KOREAN REPRESENTATION, HAHM HAS HAD A DIFFICULT AND OFTEN FRUSTRATING ROLE HERE. IF HE HAS NOT SUCCEEDED IN HIS PRIMARY TASK OF BRINGING ABOUT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ROKG AND THE GOP, IT HAS NOT BEEN THROUGH ANY LACK OF ENERGY AND ENTERPRISE ON HIS PART. LARGELY BARRED FROM ACCESS TO SENIOR LEVELS OF THE GOP, HE HAS SOUGHT WITH SOME MEASURE OF SUCCESS TO IMPRESS ON WORKING LEVEL PAK OFFICIALS AND OTHER PAKISTANIS LWHE ECONOMIC DYNAVFSM AND POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF SOUTH KOREA.

3. AMBASSADOR HAHM, AS HE HAS PREFERRED FOR BOTH POLITICAL AND PERSONAL REASONS TO BE CALLED, HAS WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE EMBASSY AND OTHER FRIENDLY MISSIONS (PARTICULARLY THE JAPANESE) IN DEVISING A COMMON STRATEGY ON THE KOREAN ISSUE AT THE UNGA AND ON OTHER EFFORTS TO ARREST THE SLIDE OF THE GOP TOWARD CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE DPRK. A GENIAL AND EASYGOING MAN, HE GETS ON WELL WITH AMERICANS. IF HE HAS BEEN DISAPPOINTED WITH OUR UNWILLINGNESS TO GIVE AS MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE KOREAN REPRESENTATION ISSUE IN OUR DEALINGS WITH THE PAKS AS HE AND HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD WISH, HE HAS NOT ALLOWED IT TO INTERFERE WITH HIS WARM RELATIONSHIP WITH US.

4. HAHM SPEAKS FLUENT ENGLISH, THOUGH HE STUMBLES OCCASIONALLY AND WILL SOMETIMES MISS SUBTLE POINTS. HE ENTERTAINS FREQUENTLY AND WELL. IN THIS, HE IS ABLY ASSISTED BY HIS WIFE, WHO STRIKES US AS MORE OUTGOING AND CAPABLE IN ENGLISH THAN MANY OF HER KOREAN DIPLOMATIC WIFE CONTEMPORARIES.
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